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IOWA PUBLIC INFORMATION BOARD

PERFORMANCE REPORT

PERFORMANCE RESULTS ACHIEVED

FISCAL YEAR 2014

Board Members

Robert Andeweg • Anthony Gaughan • Jo Martin • Andrew McKean • Gary Mohr • William Monroe
• Kathleen Richardson • Suzan Stewart • Peggy Weitzl

The board

Chapter 23 states no more than three members of the nine-member board shall represent the media, and not more than three represent cities, counties or other local governments. The members serve staggered four-year terms, and the board must be balanced by political party and gender. The board appoints a chair from among its members. The board is an independent agency. The nine initial appointees are:

---**Robert Andeweg, JD**, Urbandale (Republican) - Robert is an attorney with the Nyemaster Goode Law Firm in Des Moines. He has served on the Urbandale City Council and currently serves as that city's Mayor.

---**Tony Gaughan, JD**, West Des Moines (Republican) - Tony is an attorney who is an Assistant Professor of Law at Drake University in Des Moines. He was reappointed this year.

---**Jo Martin**, Spirit Lake (Democrat) - Jo is a retired vice president of Times-Citizen Communications in Iowa Falls, having worked for several other Iowa newspapers prior to that. She is a Past President of the Iowa Newspaper Association (INA) and the Iowa Newspaper Foundation (INF). She was reappointed this year.

---**Andy McKean, JD**, Anamosa (Republican) – Andy is an attorney who has served as a City Attorney (Morley, Martelle, and Mechanicsville), a County Supervisor (Jones County 2003-2011) and a State Legislator (State Representative 1979-1993 and State Senator 1993-2003).

---**Gary Mohr**, Bettendorf (Independent) - Gary is Executive Director, External Affairs for Eastern Iowa Community College in Davenport. He was elected to the Bettendorf City Council in November, 2014. He was reappointed this year.

---**Bill Monroe**, Johnston (Republican) (chair) - Bill retired after 29 years as Executive Director of the Iowa Newspaper Association in 2009. Prior to that, he worked at several Iowa newspapers as an editor or publisher. In 2011, Governor Branstad named him to serve (in a volunteer capacity) as the Governor's Transparency Advisor. He has served on the Executive Committee of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council. He was reappointed this year.

---**Kathleen Richardson, JD**, Des Moines (Democrat) - Kathleen is Dean of the Drake University School of Journalism and Mass Communication in Des Moines and serves as Executive Director of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council (IFOIC). She has also served as a coordinator for the Expanded News Media Coverage (camera in the courtroom) program for the Iowa Supreme Court.

---**Suzan Stewart, JD**, Sioux City (Republican) - Suzan is Senior Managing Attorney with MidAmerican Energy Company. She was reappointed this year.

---**Peggy Weitzl**, Carroll (Democrat) - Peggy retired as the Treasurer of Carroll County on December 31, 2013.

Board Staff

---**Keith Luchtel, JD**, serves as Executive Director.

---**Margaret E. Johnson, JD**, serves as Deputy Director of the Board.

---**Cindy Meyerdirk** serves as Administrative Assistant to the Board.

The Board's Vision

The goal of the Iowa Public Information Board is to facilitate participatory democracy in Iowa through education and training of its citizens and government officials in the provisions and applications of the state's open meetings and open records laws, Iowa Code Chapters 21 and 22. The stated statutory purpose of its enabling statute (Iowa Code Chapter 23) is to provide an alternative means by which to secure compliance with and enforcement of the open meetings and open records laws through the provision of an efficient, informal, and cost-effective process for resolving disputes.

Complaints Received and Service Activities

In Fiscal 2014, staff processed 643 matters. Not all are complaints as indicated below. The board anticipated an annual case rate of 300 to 350. The 642 cases included:

Formal Complaints (101) – these cases require investigation and are processed for Board review as outlined in the Rules. Complainants have included citizens, media, and government officials.

Formal Opinions (6) – these cases require research and investigation and are processed for Board review as outlined in the Rules.

Declaratory Orders and Petitions for Rule Making (5) – these requests involve research, investigation and coordination with governmental bodies and other organizations, prior to presentation to the Board as outlined in the Rules.

Informal Complaints (101) – these informal cases also require investigation, research and mediation. Informal complaints are resolved without the filing of a formal complaint to the Board. The majority of these complaints in 2014 were from citizens requesting assistance in obtaining records or accessing meetings.

Informal Requests (412) – these informal cases require review and research. Informal Requests can often be resolved within 48 hours. They do not require Board review and action under the Rules. Requestors are citizens, a member of the media or a public official. Some requestors are government staff or legal counsel seeking assistance in the interpretation of Chapters 21 and 22.

Miscellaneous Other (18) – this category includes other requests for assistance that do not fall within the above categories, such as training, legislative issues, etc.

Board proceedings

All IPIB meeting minutes for the past year are available on the website (www.ipib.iowa.gov).

Board Outreach and Training

Board members and staff represented the board at thirty-eight events. In most cases presentations were made concerning the operation of the board and its goals, powers and duties. The board has made it known to civic, law enforcement, local government, media and professional organizations that it welcomes the opportunity to provide speakers and training opportunities. Building a reputation as a resource to be used free of charge by local government officials and custodians of public records is a key board goal.

Other activities

---**Administrative rules and procedures noticed, adopted and filed.** The board successfully adopted and filed all of its administrative rules to become effective on July 1, 2013. All preliminary drafts of the rules were treated as public records and were sent to anyone requesting information about board agendas and meeting times. This transparent process enabled the board to get input from all affected stakeholders prior to filing the Notice of Rule Making. This in turn resulted in the adoption of a complete set of operating rules without controversy in advance of the statutory operational start-up date of July 1, 2013. Supplemental rules incorporating locational and contact information insertions were adopted and filed effective November 20, 2013.

---**Website Created.** Since the board is thinly staffed, it's imperative that the board have a robust website. It is an ever growing source of information. The IPIB website, www.ipib.iowa.gov, opened in late August 2013. The website includes the full text of Chapters 21, 22, and 23. It also includes questions and answers (FAQs) about various issues, copies of selected formal complaint decisions of likely interest, all minutes and agendas for the IPIB,

activities of the IPIB and contact information. The website also has links to file a formal complaint or to ask a question.

---**Training program.** For the past decade or so, the Iowa League of Cities, the Iowa State Association of Counties, the Iowa Association of School Boards, the Iowa Newspaper Foundation, the Iowa Broadcasters Association and the Iowa Freedom of Information Council have worked together to present training opportunities for their constituents and the general public. The board works with these groups and others to expand the availability of training materials and presentations. Roundtable discussions with other agency and organization representatives occur three to four times a year to review IPIB training outlines, web FAQs and web training as a way to create state-wide, uniform training. A web-based, self-taught curriculum, Open Government 101, became available in early 2014.

---**Information policies and processes established.** An email distribution list is available to anyone who wants to receive copies of all general notice items such as meeting notices, agendas and minutes. Other general interest items are also circulated on this list. The policies and processes reflect the board's desire to become known as a transparency exemplar.

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